

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, March 13, 2012

4:30 p.m., in the snack bar, Bunker Hill Golf Course

- PRESENT:** Bob Blocker, Evelyn Nadeau, Paul Hoffmann, Ken Klinge, Karen Lyness and David Schlueter
- ABSENT:** Chuck Harris
- STAFF:** Marie Ware, Pat Prevenas and Eileen Trimble
- MINUTES APPROVED; VOTE:** It was moved by Blocker, seconded by Nadeau, to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2012 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.
- BOY SCOUT REQUEST TO WAIVE ENTRANCE FEE TO EAGLE POINT PARK; VOTE:** Jack Mauss and Britt Oswald were present representing the Boy Scouts asking to have the entrance fee to Eagle Point Park waived for persons attending their pancake breakfast on Mother's Day. This request is the same every year, in exchange for waiving the entrance fee, the scouts do a service project at Eagle Point Park, this year scheduled for April 28th.
- It was moved by Lyness, seconded by Klinge, to waive the entrance fee to Eagle Point Park on Mother's Day, for anyone attending the Boy Scout pancake breakfast. The motion passed unanimously.
- CAMPERS PRESENT TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION:** Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware e-mailed commissioners information on a change in reservation process for three holidays at Miller Riverview Park campground that she was planning on implementing. Some campers that heard rumors of the lottery process were present at the meeting to voice their concerns. Campers present, signed in on paper that may be found as part of original minutes: *Callie Brown, Dick and Phyllis Lang, Rick and Sally Lang, Don Brenner, Zach Jacobson and Courtney Meyer, Chris Bell and Nicholas Thomas, and Jarrod Vanscoyoc.*
- Callie Brown:** she is a single mother with five and seven year-old children and camping is the only economical vacation for her. She like the first-come, first served process because she took the day off work and got in line. She distributed a list of possible alternatives to the lottery system, which may be found as part of the original minutes. ■ Hold the reservation-making to the second day of camping season, i.e., if the campground would open April 1st then on April 2nd at 5:00 p.m. start accepting holiday reservations. If people still want to wait in line they can still do it but they would be on foot or in a chair in a line inside the campground where they most likely camped the previous night. ■ If people sleeping in cars is the problem, do the first-come, first served system but start taking the reservations at 5:00 p.m. That way if people line up starting at 8:00 a.m. there will be fewer of them because of work obligations and there won't be the sleep-over component. ■ Take reservations indoors in the evening, something more similar to a Black Friday where people line up on their feet or in camping chairs outside a building rather than on a road inside their cars and campers. ■ Hold the first-come, first served reservation process at the Fairgrounds – people still line up in cars, campers, etc., but it would be off the road and safer.

Rick Lang: Mr. Lang and a large family group (9 to 12 families) have camped at Miller Riverview for fifteen or twenty years on the holidays. They all get campsites next to each other and the lottery process would put an end to that. If the first-come, first served process was retained, he volunteered to hand out numbers the night before and then people could get their number ahead of time and show up in the morning to make their reservation. If they were not present when their number was called, you could skip on to the next number.

Sally Lang: Ms. Lange is part of the same family group as Rick Lang. They have sisters that come from out of town. She thinks if you go the lottery system, you will probably lose a lot of campers.

Chairperson Hoffman thanked those present for coming before the commission. He said their concerns and ideas would be taken into consideration and discussed with staff. They were hearing many of these concerns for the first time.

REVIEW
RESPONSIBILITIES
OF PARK AND
RECREATION
COMMISSION:

A Commission member requested Ware review information about responsibilities of the Commission. A sheet from the Code of Ordinances describing the responsibilities of the commission was e-mailed to commissioners as part of the agenda packet and may be found as part of the original minutes. Manager Ware said the commission has the power per city ordinance to establish rules and regulations; establish fees; establish opening/closing hours of facilities; cooperate with other agencies on behalf of the department, as in leases; and solicit and accept donations for the general support of park and recreation programs. Most of the time the action taken by the commission goes back to the City Council as consent items. Ware sends a memo to the Council and explains commission action and at what meeting action was taken. The commission is a review group and listens to public feedback. Operating procedures would be staff decision.

Commissioner Nadeau asked if it is appropriate for the Commission to give recommendations to the City Council? Manager Ware shared this is appropriate, especially if you get a lot of feedback from people, just be clear if you are acting on behalf of the commission or as a private citizen. Nadeau asked if it was possible for the commission to send the City Manager and/or City Council correspondence if they felt strongly as a group about a certain subject. She has received feedback from a Councilperson who said it was helpful to hear from Park and Recreation Commissioners, or as an individual. Nadeau asked if the commission could put together a list of priorities they agree on as a group and get it to the City Council in time for their goal setting session?

Commissioner Hoffmann asked what month would be appropriate for the Commission to get their goals listed and to the City Council? That would give time to get a sense for what the majority of the Park and Recreation Commission wants for priorities. He suggested that as the summer goes on the commission formulate items for the City Council.

Manager Ware will come up with a time and let the commission know. She also reminded commissioners that any e-mails that include all Commission members could constitute a public meeting and would be public record.

SHARE NEW
PROCEDURE FOR
RESERVING
HOLIDAY
WEEKENDS AT
MILLER
RIVERVIEW PARK:

Staff considered many things before deciding to use a lottery process to reserve the three holiday weekends. ■ Came up with a lottery process similar to that used for golf permanent tee times and adult softball registration and discussed it with Ken Clayton. ■ Past procedure had people sleeping in their cars overnight or putting their car in line, leaving it and then showing up the next morning when reservations were to begin. ■ Have received calls in the past from people that didn't know you could leave your car outside the gate all night in line and then when they got to the park at 7:00 a.m., all the sites were gone. ■ Is the old process fair to those who can't sit in line in a car all night or to those who can't take a day off work? ■ Department Managers have been asked to really look at policies to make sure things are more open, welcoming to newcomers and fair to all. ■ Considered no reservations at all (first-come, first served), just show up at the campground the day you want to reserve a site but that didn't seem fair because people would have to pay for extra dates they didn't really want just to make sure they get the date(s) they do want. ■ There will be some unhappy people if we switch to the lottery but there were people that didn't like the old process; no process will please everybody. ■ Manager Ware said she would like to go to computer reservations in the future but we are not there yet.

Commissioner Hoffmann: ■ Commented on the problems with first-come, first served softball signup process before it was changed to the lottery – people were at the golf course at midnight the night before, staying all night and sometimes becoming an unruly mob. ■ Maybe we could require a \$30.00 charge to get into the holiday drawing. ■ Why don't we try it for one year and see how it goes.

Commissioner Blocker: ■ Previous policy rewarded those that put forth the effort to go sit in line. He has been there many years and seen no problem. ■ If the decision is cut and dried, we'll have to try this process and see how it goes.

Commissioner Klinge: ■ He feels the lottery is the fairest. He camps a lot and has never been able to get into Miller Riverview for the July 4th holiday because he can't get off work to go sit in line. ■ Is there some way to measure the percentage of those who are unhappy with the change? ■ Asked if Claytons would be here for the lottery and Manager Ware said yes.

Commissioners Lyness and Nadeau said it has to be fair to everybody and thought the one site per person rule was good.

Commissioner Schlueter said if you went to no reservations and people had to take extra dates they didn't want just to hold the desired dates, you lose sites somebody else could have used.

SET OPENING
DATE FOR
CAMPING AT
MILLER
RIVERVIEW PARK;
VOTE:

Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware is recommending to change the opening day for Miller Riverview Park campground from April 1st to April 15th. Even though that falls on Sunday this year, she wants the date to be the same each year. She looked at opening date of other campgrounds in the tri-state area for comparison and many opened April 15th.

Commissioner Klinge asked why not open on Saturday the 14th and change the day each year and Commissioner Blocker asked why not open on Friday, April 13th so people could camp that weekend. Manager Ware explained that she would like the date of the month to be the same each year so people always know that is opening day unless weather/flood problems.

It was moved by Nadeau, seconded by Klinge, to set opening date for Miller Riverview Park campground as April 15th. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVE
MANAGEMENT
AGREEMENT FOR
MILLER
RIVERVIEW PARK;
VOTE:

Manager Ware told commissioners that the agreement is the same as last year except now the starting date will need to be changed, and language was added to clarify responsibilities for keeping rest rooms clean. Commissioner Blocker asked if manager is only paid if campers or tents are in park and commissioner Nadeau asked about the language in section 5, management fee. It says IF the manager cleans the rest room he will be paid – is it an option, how do we not pay? Ware explained that the manager is only paid when there are campers in the park and the manager does always clean the rest rooms so not paying him has not been an issue.

It was moved by Klinge, seconded by Schlueter, to approve the Agreement with Ken Clayton for Management of Miller Riverview Park campground. The motion passed unanimously

APPROVE WATER
SPORTS CLUB
LEASE; VOTE:

New copies of the lease were distributed to commissioners due to changes from Legal Department that came after meeting documents were e-mailed. The changes were all minor language changes, nothing that changes the intent of the lease.

It was moved by Klinge, seconded by Blocker, to approve the Lease Agreement with Dubuque Water Sports Club for a section of Miller Riverview Park. The motion passed unanimously

PARK DIVISION
REPORT:

The department is in hiring mode right now: ♦ two full time Assistant Horticulturalists have been hired – one shared with Public Works and the other one year-round in our department. ♦ Manager Ware is working with Personnel Department to set the Civil Service test for the Natural Resources and Sustainable Practices Specialist position. ♦ It could be a three-month process to complete the hiring process for Park Division Manager but hopefully the job will be posted within the next two weeks. The new Multicultural Family Center Director starts March 19th.

RECREATION
DIVISION REPORT:

♦ **Golf course** opened at Noon on March 13th. It's the earliest opening day ever except for once about twenty years ago. ♦ **After School sports** basketball program has been completed and track registrations are now being accepted. ♦ Department will not be offering **Lifeguarding** class this year because Red Cross eliminated all local safety services support and regionalized everything. We don't have access to know what to teach yet. ♦ Recreation Division Manager Pat Prevenas is working to get **pavilion reservations** online. Currently there are only three pavilions where wedding receptions are allowed and they require an additional \$50.00 deposit. There is nothing in the Code of Ordinances limiting receptions to certain pavilions and online reservation software does not ask what rental is for, so staff recommend is recommending eliminating special rules for receptions unless the commission has concerns or issues. No discussion except that Commissioner thought it was a good idea.

CHANGE REFUND
POLICY FOR
REGISTRATION
CLASSES; VOTE:

Recreation Division Manager Pat Prevenas distributed a sheet summarizing existing refund policies, most approved by the Commission over the years. **Golf** patrons are given a rain check. At the **pools**, managers have the discretion to give out rain checks but cashiers also warn people at questionable times that pool may close early with impending weather. **Pavilion renters** are given full refund if requested four weeks or more in advance of rental date because it opens the building up for another rental. **Recreation classes** does not really have a set policy, department has been very liberal with giving refunds. Staff is requesting that policy be set that refunds will be granted if requested fourteen days prior to class start date. If under fourteen days, refund would require Recreation Division Manager approval. Staff also discussed an administrative fee but decided against it because it is difficult to collect and the administrative time to process. A set policy will allow for clerical staff to be able tell people right away if they can get a refund.

It was moved by Klinge, seconded by Schlueter, to approve the refund policy for Recreation Classes, that refunds will be granted if requested fourteen days prior to class start date and less than fourteen days would require Recreation Division Manager approval. The motion passed unanimously.

MANAGER'S
REPORT:

♦ **Bee Branch** project: nothing new in the last month. ♦ **Marina**: the Port Marina is now assigned to Leisure Services Department. Bids went out through Engineering Department for contractual management. Documents were mailed to the local marinas, Diamond Jo, Grand River Center, Convenient Stores and forty individuals downloaded the documents online, but only one bid was received. Many of the local companies said they did not bid because there was no record of sales to show if the operation would be successful or if it would pay to take on the project.

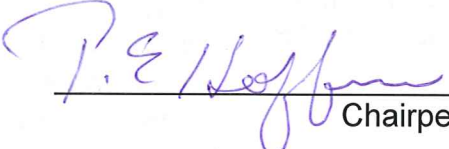
Commissioner Blocker asked if you could use one of the boat slips for just a few hours and/or stay overnight. Manager Ware said a slip could be used for just a few hours or overnight for up to ten nights. All 70 slips must be transient

per grant requirements. The slips are open, not covered and there will be a fee, no free slips. There will be fuel and shower and laundry facilities available.

OTHER BUSINESS: **Change date of April meeting:** City Expo is on the second Tuesday in April and the first Tuesday is the Iowa Park and Recreation Association conference so Department and Division Manager will both be gone. Manager Ware asked if commissioners would be available if the April meeting was changed to third Tuesday, April 17th. Commissioners agreed that April 17th should work.

ADJOURN;
VOTE:

It was moved by Klinge, seconded by Schlueter, that the meeting be adjourned at 5:46 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.


Chairperson


Attest